

## FMC DEVENS

FMC Devens is one of over one hundred institutions in the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), an agency which houses over one hundred twenty-five thousand inmates nationwide. The institution is one of only seven medical centers in the system, resulting in a large number of referrals from other BOP institutions. FMC Devens, which has a capacity of over one thousand, houses and provides services for inmates with significant mental health concerns, inmates with chronic medical problems, inmates receiving drug treatment, low and minimum security inmates without significant psychiatric or medical conditions, and individuals referred by the judicial system for forensic evaluations.

The institution, which has a staff of over four hundred, took its first inmates in January, 1999, and has been expanding in population and scope of services ever since that time. The Mental Health Unit, which houses inmates with both chronic and acute psychiatric problems, consists of two locked and two unlocked wings. In addition to inmates referred to this institution for mental health treatment, the Mental Health Unit also houses inmates who are referred by the courts for forensic evaluation. These inmates, who are in pre-trial status, are assessed to determine competency to stand trial or mental state at the time of their offense.

As mentioned above, inmates with chronic medical conditions, such as renal failure, HIV, partial paralysis, and cancer, are housed and treated at FMC Devens. While most inmates with medical problems are housed in outpatient units, there will be a small inpatient medical population. The institution has its own dialysis treatment area where inmates receive three treatments per week. Special resources are available for inmates who are wheelchair-bound or who have other physical limitations. Surgical procedures are not carried out at FMC Devens, however. Inmates in need of surgery are transported to a local hospital outside of the institution where the procedure is performed. A hospice program will be initiated shortly for inmates with terminal illnesses.

FMC Devens offers both a nonresidential drug treatment program and a comprehensive, residential, drug treatment program for inmates who have substance abuse problems. Inmates who complete the five hundred-hour program may receive up to one year off their sentences. A dual diagnosis program is also available to inmates who have both a substance abuse history and a diagnosable mental illness.

In addition to medical and mental health care, inmates at FMC Devens have the opportunity to pursue a GED, learn English as a second language, obtain computer and other job skills, maintain regular employment, have access to a variety of recreational activities, and pursue college credits. Unlike the prisons depicted in the movies or on television, FMC Devens and other BOP facilities are characterized by staff professionalism, humane treatment of inmates, an emphasis on safety and sanitation, and well-refined, modern, and effective security procedures.

## **PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES**

The Psychology Services department at FMC Devens consists of seven doctoral-level Psychologists, four Drug Treatment Specialists, and two secretaries. The Psychology department is responsible for, among other things, the Drug Abuse (treatment) Program, the coordination and administration of all forensic evaluations, the Suicide Prevention Program, and the Employee Assistance Program. Furthermore, psychologists play a vital role in assisting institution crisis teams such as the Hostage Negotiation Team and the Crisis Support Team. The Psychology department is frequently called upon to provide ongoing individual and group psychotherapy, conduct suicide risk assessments, intervene in crisis situations, consult with other staff members, provide feedback on applicants for employment, and conduct intake interviews.

Each member of the Psychology department has his or her own office, a computer, and access to various computer programs such as Groupwise for e-mail access, Psychology Data System for inputting client and session data, and Corel Wordperfect. Interns have their own offices and computers as well as access to the computer programs mentioned above. Also, interns can utilize the Psychology FAX machine and photocopier. Additionally, the department has a fairly large conference room where didactic presentations, group supervision meetings, staff meetings, and journal article reviews are held.

Following is a list and description of the psychologists working at FMC Devens:

### **Dennis Becotte, Ph.D. - Chief, Psychology Services**

Dr. Becotte earned Masters degrees in Psychology and Counseling from Columbia University in 1977 and 1978, respectively. He received his doctorate in Counseling Psychology from the University of Pittsburgh in 1987 and completed his internship training with the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Dr. Becotte has served as a Staff Psychologist, Drug Abuse Program Coordinator, and Chief Psychologist during his fifteen-year tenure with the BOP. As Chief Psychologist at FMC Devens, he is responsible for the administration of Psychology Services which includes management of mentally ill inmates, substance abuse treatment programs, the forensic evaluation service, internship training, the Health Psychology program, and the Employee Assistance Program. His interests include administration, critical incident stress management, trauma, men's issues, grief counseling, personality disorders, and violence risk assessment. Dr. Becotte is licensed in Pennsylvania.

### **Paul Anderson, Psy.D. - Director of Psychology Training**

Dr. Anderson received his doctorate in Clinical Psychology from Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 1996. He completed a pre-doctoral internship at the Federal Correctional Institution in Morgantown, WV, and completed his postdoctoral training in Correctional Psychology for the state of New Hampshire. Prior to coming to FMC Devens, he worked at a psychiatric inpatient unit and for a community mental health agency. Dr. Anderson is responsible for overseeing and supervising the pre-doctoral internship program and for the treatment and

maintenance of inmates in the General Population. His interests include clinical supervision, treatment of personality disorders, an integrative approach to psychotherapy, and group psychotherapy. Dr. Anderson is licensed in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

**Susan Bates, Ed.D. - Drug Abuse Program Coordinator**

Dr. Bates earned her doctorate in Counseling Psychology in 1992 from West Virginia University. She completed her internship training at the Federal Correctional Institution in Morgantown, West Virginia. Dr. Bates began her full-time employment with the BOP in 1992 and became Drug Abuse Program Coordinator at the Federal Correctional Institution in McKean, Pennsylvania, in 1993. During her eight years with the BOP, she has been primarily responsible for coordinating drug treatment programs including both outpatient treatment and long-term residential treatment. Her professional interests include drug and alcohol treatment, indigenous forms of spiritual healing, the use of community as a healing modality, and holistic methods of alternative medicine.

**Mark Brooks, Ph.D. - Forensic Psychologist**

Dr. Brooks received his doctorate in Clinical Psychology from Arizona State University in 1989. He completed a predoctoral internship and postdoctoral fellowship in sexual abuse treatment at Baylor College of Medicine. Prior to joining the BOP, Dr. Brooks worked at Atascadero State Hospital in California where he provided therapy for the sex offender treatment program and conducted competency, insanity, and psychopathy evaluations. He also provided psychotherapy to juveniles and conducted forensic evaluations in the community. As the Forensic Psychologist, Dr. Brooks is responsible for completing competency, criminal responsibility, and dangerousness evaluations, providing expert testimony in court, and providing treatment designed to restore inmates to competency. His interests include forensic evaluations and sex offender evaluations. Dr. Brooks has earned licenses in California, Arizona, Florida, and West Virginia and remains actively licensed in New York.

**Jeffrey Sonnega, Ph.D. - Staff Psychologist**

Dr. Sonnega received his doctorate in School Psychology from Michigan State University in 1995. Prior to joining the Bureau of Prisons in 1998, he worked with the Michigan Department of Corrections. As the Staff Psychologist to the Mental Health Unit at FMC Devens, Dr. Sonnega is responsible for providing services to inmates on both the inpatient and outpatient mental health units and for providing consultation to the Psychiatry department. His interests include suicide risk assessment, psychopharmacology, critical incident stress management, and the assessment of personality disorders. Dr. Sonnega is licensed in Michigan.

**Thomas Patenaude, Psy.D. - Forensic Psychologist**

Dr. Patenaude received his doctorate in Clinical Psychology from the Illinois School of Professional Psychology in 1997 with a subspeciality in Forensic Psychology. He completed his internship in Clinical and Forensic Psychology at the Northeast Florida State Hospital and his post-doctoral fellowship in Correctional Psychology with the BOP. Dr. Patenaude began full-time employment with the BOP in 1997, beginning as a Staff Psychologist at the the Federal

Correctional Institution in Beaumont, Texas. His professional interests include psychopathy, personality disorders, and the assessment of dangerousness and malingering. His theoretical orientation is eclectic.

**Christopher S. Bersani, Psy.D. -Health Psychologist**

Dr. Bersani earned his doctorate in Clinical and Health Psychology from the Illinois School of Professional Psychology in 1995. His pre-doctoral internship was at the Navy Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. Dr. Bersani served in the United States Navy as a Staff and Chief Psychologist in Florida and Rhode Island from 1995 until joining the BOP in 2000. His interests include Health Psychology, biofeedback, crisis intervention, and victims' assistance. His orientation is cognitive-behavioral.

## **PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

The 2000-2001 intern class is the first at FMC Devens. All three of our full-time interns were matched with our program during the APPIC match process that occurred in February. Consistent with APPIC policy, membership in APPIC will be formally sought as soon as the first internship year begins in September, 2000. APA accreditation will be sought by 2003.

The overall mission of the predoctoral internship program is to train correctional psychologists. However, through the combination of direct patient care, individual and group supervision, didactic presentations, and assigned readings, interns will be knowledgeable about areas relevant to all psychologists. The goals of the internship experience at FMC Devens include developing and nurturing interns' skills in the areas of individual psychotherapy, group psychotherapy, assessment, and consultation. Although the client population consists entirely of incarcerated adult males, there are several distinct facets of that population, all of which require specific skills and knowledge. It is the opinion of the Psychology staff at FMC Devens that interns should have the opportunity to work with each of the specialized client populations present at this institution. The internship provides year-round exposure to the areas present at most BOP institutions while also providing more intensive but time-limited training experiences in the areas specific to a medical center.

Throughout the entire internship year, interns will have exposure to the following two areas:

### **Correctional Psychology and Consultation**

At FMC Devens, the majority of inmates live within the general population. Additionally, over one hundred minimum security inmates are housed outside the institution fence in a single-building "camp." Although the general population and camp inmates generally do not suffer from debilitating mental health or medical problems, some may be diagnosed with Axis I and/or Axis II disorders and others may seek psychological assistance to deal with adjustment issues, family problems, or crises. In their work with the general population, interns carry individual therapy cases, lead psychoeducational or process groups, conduct regular rounds in the Special Housing Unit, complete assessments, follow mentally ill inmates housed within the general population, and conduct intake interviews. Furthermore, interns are assigned to a housing unit in the general population. They attend Unit Team meetings for inmates residing in their assigned housing unit and provide staff members from these units and other areas with clinical insight and recommendations. In addition, interns provide training to institution staff on issues related to mental health. Supervision in this area is provided by Dr. Anderson.

### **Drug Abuse Program**

Throughout the training year, interns provide clinical services to inmates participating in the Drug Abuse Program. As noted above, FMC Devens offers a comprehensive "residential" drug program and a shorter-term "nonresidential" program. Interns' duties while working with the Drug Abuse Program include providing individual and group psychotherapy, teaching a

nonresidential drug education class, teaching a nonresidential dual diagnosis class, conducting eligibility interviews for the residential program, and conducting evaluations on program participants who may have learning problems or who may suffer from a previously undetected mental illness that is affecting their functioning in the program. Supervision in the Drug Abuse Program is provided by Dr. Bates.

In addition to their experiences with the General Population and Drug Abuse Program, interns complete a four-month rotation in each of the following three areas:

### **Forensics**

FMC Devens is a Forensic Study Site for federal courts and receives referrals from all parts of the eastern United States to perform evaluations concerning insanity, trial competency, risk of dangerousness, and sentencing issues. In this rotation, interns participate in all stages of the forensic evaluation process including, among other things, interviewing the subject, contacting relevant parties such as the court and attorneys, conducting a comprehensive record review, and administering, scoring, and interpreting psychological measures. This will be done under the supervision of Dr. Brooks and Dr. Patenaude.

### **Clinical Health Psychology**

When participating in this rotation, interns will work with both the inpatient medical population and the chronic outpatient medical population. This includes individuals who are undergoing kidney dialysis, have significant physical limitations (e.g., are wheelchair-bound), are HIV positive, or have some other chronic medical problem. Interns will conduct individual and group psychotherapy, design behavior change programs for behavioral risk factors, assess candidates for organ transplantation, and do crisis intervention with this population. Furthermore, interns have the opportunity to learn and utilize specific pain management techniques, such as biofeedback and hypnosis, and work closely with Health Services staff on such issues as medication management and treatment compliance. Interns may also provide consultation to health services providers on issues like staff burn out and compassion fatigue. Interns will be supervised by a full-time Health Psychologist who will begin work at FMC Devens in early 2001. Dr. Becotte currently supervises interns in this rotation.

### **Mental Health Unit**

This rotation involves working with inmates who reside in both the inpatient and outpatient wings of the Mental Health Unit. Interns assigned to this rotation will attend the weekly multidisciplinary treatment team, carry an individual therapy case load, facilitate a therapy group, and complete evaluations on inmates referred by members of the treatment team. Crisis intervention, prediction of suicide risk, and assessing the potential for violence and dangerousness are also a part of this rotation. Interns in the Mental Health Unit rotation are supervised by Dr. Sonnega.

Providing high-quality supervision to interns is of the highest priority. Interns will be provided

with one and one-half hours of individual supervision each week by both the Director of Psychology Training and by their rotation supervisor. Additionally, interns will participate in one and one-half hours of group supervision per week. This will involve a case conference format in which interns present cases for review and discussion. Individual supervision will be tailored to the needs of each person and can include review of written notes and reports, discussion of therapy cases, review of a taped session, and live supervision of sessions through a one-way mirror.

Professional development is considered an essential element of the training experience. Interns attend weekly didactic training seminars in which topics are presented by psychology staff, other institutional staff (such as psychiatrists and the staff attorney), and outside presenters from local universities and graduate programs. Furthermore, interns will be encouraged to attend and participate in monthly journal club meetings that are open to all mental health professionals within the institution. In addition to training within the institution, interns will have the opportunity to attend at least one local conference during the training year as well as grand rounds at local hospitals and universities.

Benefits for the internship include an annual stipend of approximately \$38,000. Each intern accumulates four hours of vacation time and four hours of sick leave every two weeks.

Regarding research, interns are able to utilize the inmate population at FMC Devens as research subjects. Interns are encouraged to use the inmate populations as subjects for their dissertations. Policies and procedures related to research in the institution are sent to interns prior to the start of the internship year.

Evaluation of interns' performance is conducted on a quarterly basis. Interns are evaluated in each of several core areas. With input from other supervisors, the Director of Psychology Training completes a standard evaluation form and individually shares the results with each intern. Interns also evaluate the internship program on a quarterly basis and have an opportunity to discuss their comments and ratings with the training director. These ratings and comments are discussed by the Training Committee and will be considered when making possible changes.

## **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

The internship program within the BOP has produced many individuals that now hold psychologist or administrative positions within the system. Recently, it was estimated that sixty percent of psychologists working within the BOP completed a their predoctoral internship at a BOP site. It is very common for individuals who complete a predoctoral internship and/or a postdoctoral fellowship within the BOP to move directly into a Staff Psychologist position.

Opportunities for advancement for psychologists within the BOP are extensive. Since the federal inmate population continues to grow at a staggering rate, several new federal institutions are opened each year. This necessitates the hiring of many psychologists as well as the promotion of psychologists to positions of increasing responsibility. In addition to advancement within Psychology Services, psychologists have advanced to the ranks of institution administration and beyond. The current Director of the Bureau of Prisons, Dr. Kathleen Hawk-Sawyer, was a Psychology Intern and psychologist within the system.

Psychology staff at FMC Devens feel strongly about assisting interns in subsequent job placement. During the internship year, interns will have access to psychologist job openings within the BOP as well as information about how to apply for positions. The Psychology Department can also assist interns in making connections with Chief Psychologists from other institutions who are hiring new psychologists.



## LOCAL AREA

FMC Devens is located on the grounds of Fort Devens, the recently decommissioned army base. The facility is located approximately thirty-five miles west of Boston, New England's largest and best-known city. Boston, which can be reached by car or train from the Devens area, represents all of what big-city life has to offer. Boston and adjoining Cambridge house some of the finest colleges and universities in the world, including Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Boston College, Boston University, Northeastern University, and Tufts University. There are many fine restaurants in Boston, with a particular emphasis on Italian dining in the North End of the city, Boston's "Little Italy," and on many great seafood restaurants. There are a great many entertainment options in Boston, including high-quality live theater, the world-famous Boston Pops orchestra, and the Boston Symphony. Shopping is certainly ample, with well-known shopping areas such as Faneuil Hall and Newbury Street. For sports enthusiasts, college and professional sporting events are in great abundance, with the Red Sox, Celtics, and Bruins playing in Boston and the Patriots playing in nearby Foxboro. Boston also features several impressive museums such as the Museum of Fine Arts.

As America's oldest major city and site of many important events in the formation of this nation, Boston offers many interesting and famous tourist sites. Included in this list are the Old North Church, where Paul Revere began his famous ride, the site of the Battle of Bunker Hill, and the site of the Boston Massacre. All of these places are on the Freedom Trail, a walking trail through the city that highlights these and other historic locations. Closer to FMC Devens are Lexington and Concord, where the first battles of the American Revolution took place, and Walden Pond, made famous by Henry David Thoreau. Also, less than two hours from the institution are Salem, site of the famous witch trials of the 1600s, and Plymouth, where the Pilgrims established their first permanent settlement.

Worcester, Massachusetts' second-largest city, is only twenty-six miles south of the institution. It is the home of many fine institutions of higher learning such as Clark University and the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Worcester also offers many fine dining and entertainment options. Other well-known New England cities, such as Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and Providence, Rhode Island, can be reached by car in little over an hour from FMC Devens, and offer much in the way of tourism, history, dining, and entertainment.

Many great recreational options are available in New England. For beach lovers, the shore is only an hour from the institution and Cape Cod is only two hours away. In addition, both Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket can be reached by ferry from Cape Cod. The White Mountains of New Hampshire, including Mount Washington, site of the strongest recorded wind in world history, and Mount Monadnock, the most frequently-climbed mountain in North America, can be reached by car in two hours. Many outstanding skiing areas exist in northern New England, especially in Vermont, and most are within a three-hour drive. Many vacationers in search of a relaxing experience gravitate toward the Berkshire Mountains in western Massachusetts, coastal Maine, and many areas of Vermont and New Hampshire.

## APPLICATION PROCEDURES

The predoctoral internship program at FMC Devens is open to doctoral students in Clinical and Counseling Psychology programs who are citizens of the United States. While preference may be given to students from APA accredited programs, students from non-accredited programs are also encouraged to apply. The application of female and minority students is especially encouraged.

Once applications are received, they will be reviewed individually. Applicants who are ranked most highly will be invited for an in-person interview. Although telephone interviews will be granted, in-person interviews are encouraged. Positions will be filled through the APPIC Matching Service and results will be communicated to both students and training sites on Notification of Results Day. This internship site agrees to abide by the APPIC Policy that no person at this training facility will solicit, accept, or use any ranking-related information from any intern applicant.

Since the internship position is considered a “sensitive” government position, students who are matched with this internship site must, prior to beginning the internship, take part in a security clearance process that includes a background investigation and drug screening. Successful completion of this process is a necessary prerequisite for employment as a BOP intern. The security clearance process can be completed at this institution or at any other BOP facility.

The deadline for application materials is ***January 1, 2001***. Applicants are encouraged to submit application materials as early as possible, however.

Please send application materials or direct questions pertaining to the internship to:

Paul Anderson, Psy.D.  
Director of Psychology Training  
Psychology Services  
Federal Medical Center - Devens  
P.O. Box 880  
Ayer, MA 01432  
(978) 796-1420  
e-mail: [pmanderson@bop.gov](mailto:pmanderson@bop.gov)

A complete application package includes:

- APPIC Application for Psychology Internship (AAPI)
- *Official* transcripts of all graduate work
- An updated curriculum vita
- Three letters of recommendation from supervisors familiar with the applicant

- APPIC Academic Program's Verification of Internship Eligibility and Readiness (to be completed by the applicant's Training Director)
- One work sample (assessment report)
- Optional Application for Federal Employment - OF 612